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Christian writers, Jewish legalism is judged too unfavorably. It cannot be proved, Mr. Schechter avers, "that legalism or nomism has ever tended to suppress the spiritual side of religion." I think that students of the history of religions would agree that it has been proved a great many times.

As a whole this volume is a valuable contribution to that better understanding of Judaism which cannot fail to result in a juster appreciation. To the same good end the author's articles on "Aspects of Rabbinic Theology" which have appeared in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, and are shortly to be issued in a volume of the Jewish Library by the same publishers, will also do their part. It should be added that notes at the end of the volume give references to the literature and to the passages cited. Some of these do not appear to have been verified with sufficient care, and there are occasional omissions; for example, on p. 105 an important passage from Nachmanides' *Date of Redemption* is said to be quoted by Azariah de Rossi, but the reader is left to discover for himself that it is at the end of chap. 43 of *Imre Bina*. There is also an index of names, but none of subjects.

ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

GEORGE F. MOORE.

THE EPIC OF THE FALL OF MAN: a Comparative Study of Cædmon, Dante and Milton. By S. HUMPHREYS GURTEEN, A.M., LL.D. New York and London: Putnam's Sons. 1896. pp. x + 347.

THIS book is of a type that has become popular of late years; one very easy to produce even with inferior preparation, but of value only when prepared by one who has thoroughly mastered the topic treated. There has been a deluge of lectures on comparative literature, most of which have been of little value, no doubt, but which have not been printed and consequently have done but little harm. Mr. Gurteen's work might well have remained in the obscurity of manuscript, for it is a very shallow and shabby specimen of its class.

The word "shabby" is chosen intentionally, because it seems to be the proper term to apply to a writer that takes up a topic on which many are now seeking information and offers his readers a synopsis of what was said by editors and critics more than half a century ago, much of which has been totally disproved by later investigations or by recent discoveries. If Mr. Gurteen thinks that Conybeare's *Illustrations* (pub-

lished 1826) or Thorpe's *Cædmon* (published 1832) contain the latest on the subjects treated in them, and that the sixty or seventy years that have since passed have contributed nothing to our knowledge of Old English, either he is mistaken or all scholars of repute today are so. But these are the books, he tells us in his preface, which he has used for the *Beowulf* and the *Genesis*, and his book shows that he has made use of no others.

It would take too much space to enumerate all the errors of the book, some of which are taken directly from his authorities, and might have been corrected by reading the originals, now that better editions and more helps are to be found. As specimens of these errors, we refer to the statement about Beowulf's sword, Hrunting (!), Thorkelin's transcripts of the MS., the extraordinary grammatical theories on page 48, and various other faults of a similar character. Even if one is inclined to regard these as not likely to lessen the value of the main theme, they are nevertheless an index of the writer's fitness to treat a subject that calls for a thorough knowledge of Old English poetry, and Mr. Gurteen's lack of this knowledge becomes still more apparent when he reaches his theme. We find repeated in his book the old theory that Cædmon's Hymn, as we find it in the Old English version of Bede, was a versification of Bede's Latin, made by Alfred, though the original Northumbrian hymn has been discovered in a MS. where it was written a century before Alfred was born. Furthermore, Mr. Gurteen maintains, as others did before this older version was found, that the hymn is taken from the opening passage of the *Genesis*, an utter impossibility. He speaks of Cædmon throughout his book as if no one had ever raised a doubt of his authorship of the poems in the Junian MS., and shows no sign of ever having heard of Sievers' *Der Heliand und die angelsächsische Genesis*, in which it is distinctly proved that the story of the Fall of the Angels and of the Temptation and the Fall of Man is an interpolation. He does not seem to have read Sievers' argument that this whole story is a translation from Old Saxon, or to know that this conjecture was proved true two or three years ago by Zangemeister's discovery of fragments of the original in the Vatican Library. He is apparently unconscious that it is now proved, as clearly as anything of the kind can be proved, that whether we ascribe other parts of the *Genesis* to Cædmon or not he is surely not the author of the part that contains the story of the Fall.

There is much more that might be cited in justification of the epithet "shabby," which we have given to the book. We are strongly

tempted to apply the same word to the reputable journals that have favorably reviewed it. Had they placed the work in the hands of Old English scholars, they would not have subjected themselves to the charge of helping to mislead those that are seeking for information in regard to the older monuments of our mother speech. At the present time, when the interest in Old English literature is reviving, there are many that cannot go to the originals and must trust to books like the one under consideration for their information, and a favorable review of a worthless book does not lack much of being a moral wrong.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

F. A. BLACKBURN.

JESU MUTTERSPRACHE. Das Galiläische Aramäisch in seiner Bedeutung für die Erklärung der Reden Jesu. Von LIC. ARNOLD MEYER. Freiburg. 1896. xiv + 176 pp. M. 3.

THERE are three reasons for which our author claims that his investigations are important. (1) They are in thorough accord with the genuine spirit of Lutheranism, which objects to permit any incrustation of tradition or of authoritative interpretation to gather over the Scriptures, but insists that each generation should go direct to the written Word and interpret it for itself. (2) They are in accord with the spirit of the age, which is undoubtedly "Back to Christ;" and this desire to know what Jesus of Nazareth really did teach cannot rest satisfied with what is well known to be merely a translation of his *ipsissima verba*; men yearn to hear the very Galilean utterances which the common people heard so gladly, and which were stored so affectionately in the breasts of the fishermen of Bethsaida. (3) Since Meyer has persuaded himself that our gospels in their present form are of late authorship, and that they contain many sayings of Jesus which he did not literally utter, but which were rather due to the inspiration of the risen Lord and to *verbatim* reminiscences of Christ's literal discourses, he feels the need of some criticism to determine which is of earlier and which of later origin, and he fondly supposes that a knowledge of Galilean Aramaic will, by revealing the terseness and alliteration of Christ's veritable words, supply, to some extent, the needed criticism.

Meyer, in his first chapter, gives an excellent résumé of the views held by many post-Reformation scholars, who have, more or less vaguely, surmised that the Greek gospels do not present to us the